

Sonnet.

Joy cannot claim a purer bliss,
Nor grief a dew from stain more clear.
Than female friendship's melting kiss,
Than female friendship's parting tear.
How sweet the heart's full bliss to prove,
To her whose smile must crown the store;
How sweeter still to tell of woes,
To her whose faithful breast would share
In every grief, in every care,
Whose sigh can lull them to repose!

Oh, bleed'st thou, there is no sorrow,
But from thy breast, a sweetest sorrow
Even to the pale and drooping flower,
That fades in love's neglected hour,
Even with her woes can friendship's power
O'er happier feeling blend.
Tis from her restless bed to creep,
And sink like weary babe to sleep,
On the soft couch her sorrows weep,
The bosom of a friend.

TWO GIRLS WHO TRIED FARMING.

A magazine tells us in a rather picturesque, gossip way of the successful experience of "Two Girls that Tried Farming." The case is put by the first plaintiff—who is the chronicler— "Dorothy Alice Shepherd and Louise Barney act. vs. Fate." The first was a school teacher, and the other a hired girl. They had long been fast friends, and living of their lonely life, and of merely serving others, they resolved, after much dreaming and planning, to help themselves to independence. To make their own way.

We wanted a home, we wanted to be out of our mistress's hands, we wanted a living that should be independent of the likes, dislikes and caprices of others." And the opportunity moment came. A maiden sister of Louise, who had saved \$300 as a house-keeper, died and left her this money. So one day, soon after, she said, "Let us go West!"

"It was a startling thought to me," says Dorothy, "a girl who never had planted a hill of corn, or hoed a row of potatoes in her life, and who had a hacking cough and a pain in her side." Still, she wanted the out-door air and freedom, and having first examined nearly all the implements to be used on a farm, and thinking them "as manageable by feminine muscles as the heavy kettles, washing machines, mattresses and carpets that belong to woman's indoor work," she resolved to go. The two went to Michigan, and with the school teacher's three hundred, their capital on arriving was about a thousand dollars—not a very large sum with which to buy and equip a farm. A cousin, resident there, took them around view- ing, and they found, and at once purchased thirty-five acres, without using their whole means. "As a whole it was a narrow, hilly stretch, outlined by a weak skeleton of a fence; a forbidding surface of hill-top and ground and wild ferns, the distant hills crowned with tall mullins. There was not a sprig of clover on the place, and though there was an old brown house and barn there was not an orchard tree, nor a reminiscence of garden."

Widespread consternation on the part of the neighbors occurred over this choice; and Cousin John, who stood on the tower of experience, looked down therefrom with rather malicious purport, and disapproved at wearisome length of the poor soil. "He warned us," says Dorothy, "that we could never expect to raise wheat." But Dorothy had seen nothing but wheat in the State, and didn't believe in it, on account of a few principles of chemistry, and let the expert laugh at her "schoolmarm farming." Before taking possession of their farm the two girls prepare themselves to do so by earning a little more money, and by accumulating some practical experience. Dorothy, therefore, hires out to John for out-door work at \$12 a month, and Louise to a farmer near by for housework at \$2 week. The former equips herself in short dresses, and finds everything hard at first, but nothing impossible. With a small boy she cuts up half a dozen acres of corn, hucks the same, and binds the bundles. It tore her hands, and then when she carried the bundles to set them up, they would often fall in pieces. Earning two German women working in corn near by, she accosts them, and gets a hint: "Go pry some small bits of leech rope, and not tear your small hands with twisting stalks and marsh hay. It do take more time to twist him than it do to earn de leech rope."

Outdoor work and oatmeal give the schoolmarm an appetite, cure her cough, and strengthen her muscles. She learns the man's way of holding a plow and turning a furrow, and she and the young boy plow out the potatoes, in the potato harvest. She learns how to make a corn-stick, and how to lay a load. She picks apples, drives the mow to cut the seed clover, harnesses, milks, feeds and cares for stock, swings an ax, and flies a saw. She questions, and compares her answers with what she reads in the agricultural papers. At length she gets Cousin John to go over with his team to her farm. He plows every inch of it except the door-yard and wood-lot; but protests against the nonsense of "fall plowing." He protests still more because Dorothy bargains for every load of barnyard compost which the farmers for ten miles around would call and deliver. A friendly neighbor laughs at Miss Shepherd, who's "agoin' to work her farm with ideas."

tensive clovering compelled them to hire pasture for their horse "Pamper," and to "soil" the cow "Gentle Maggie," but even this they found profit in. While the spring tillage is not yet in order they shoulder their axes and dinner-pails and proceed to cut the year's wood, which they obtain by thinning out the young trees. They have no rails for fences, and so buy logs and have them sawed, a board fence in their locality being the cheapest. Louise, driving a boxless wagon to the saw-mill, rode on the reach. Of course she strove to look very pretty, and her partner, who writes of it, says "it was thought rather 'cunning' than otherwise." They both decide it is no harder to unload the boards than to dance several hours. Except digging the post-holes they built their fence; took down and relaid other fences; practiced driving their new horse over the rough lots, while standing in the wagon, where it was sometimes necessary to get out and remove logs to secure a roadway, and came back loaded with chips and summer wood.

There were three acres not tillable, covered by a growth of white oak grubs, which served them two years for "knitting work." These they cut down, trimming the tallest for fences, and burning the stumps and refuse together. Night after night in the summer they had bonfires for this purpose, and twice the whole neighborhood was called to save the fence and put out the flames. It was a bit of gray life—a delightful outburst—that they enjoyed. In early April they bring lettuce and peas under the snow, by aid of a thin cover of straw and some loose, protecting corn-stalks—and so the garden thrives. Dorothy describes with great spirit a runaway drive which Louise took with Pamper, merely to break him in after a fractious spell, and succeeded. The neighbors for some time had plainly been of the opinion that "then two girls have no business with a horse," but they probably changed it after this adventure.

One lesson in their experience proved that to raise chickens, eggs, butter, and small fruits for a market, you must have a market. "Therefore, enterprising little women, if you can secure land there, remain East with your dainty Jersey cows, your Leghorns and Dorings. Stay by the good markets. Your labors will be no more arduous, while the returns will be double." One day when Cousin John sends over a team and plow, with driver, in return for sewing favors, Dorothy persuades the man to let her plow the plow. It was a very spongy, hilly piece, and also a poor piece. Dorothy, in her place, "We can plow, as I said, but do not think it advisable. But the two girls dragged and marked the four-acre without help; and find they can easier sew and make dresses, and hilly plowing and mowing done with the results, than to do those last themselves. And why not? "Dozens of farmers do not seem to do something outside, and by a job of carpentering, mason-work, threshing-machine, or the like, furnish themselves with many comforts otherwise unobtainable."

There is one other exploit that is worth telling. The girls had been so often assured that their land "wouldn't grow corn," they began to think in might be so. But they wish to know. So they compost the grain of their henry with plastered mud it is fine, dry and odorless. "Such a task as that was! Lou would stoop and lean her forehead, wet and red, upon her hoe-handle, and utter a bit of the current but kindly neighborhood sarcasm. 'Two girls! Don't you think so Dolly?' And Dorothy says: 'I did think so sometimes.' This home-made fertilizer was dropped by them with a pail and spoon in each hill—and if the opinions concerning the soil, with which they had been favored, were correct, it had some effect; for their yield upon the average "was ninety bushels up to the acre." "And let me say," says Dorothy, "that in most instances, as in this, it has paid us to work our farm with ideas." Their superior melons, turnips, savoy, and strawberries were all the result of special work on special plans.

The upshot of this sketch, so cleverly told, is that two wide awake, energetic girls have made themselves an independent home, and make farming pay. They found hard work, and still find it; but their indoor coyness and comfort reward them for it all. And Louise says—on behalf of disconsolate and aimless women: "Now that men are coming more and more to share their occupation with us, I do wish the thousands who are tired and restless and discouraged, and haven't head enough to become doctors and lawyers, and yet need money just as badly, could see what a pleasant way of living this is. I wish you could tell them, Dolly." And so Dolly writes the story.

A Tender Epistle from a Boy.

A heart-broken young named Frank, in Wilmington, N. C., nine years old, has lately found relief by inditing the following letter to a playmate of the other sex:

MY DARLING LUCY: I must leave you tomorrow, you used to love me but your love for me is gone but my love for you is just the same just think Lucy how your words cut my heart I would give you things too as well as Robert but if you want to sell your love for two or three apples go to a head I don't care a straw they love the ground you walk on I would die for you I love you Lucy please receive my love.

P.S. if you here of me being dead you drove me to it. R. says he don't care a fig for you more the rest.

Dressing Sleep.

A correspondent of the *Indiana Farmer* says: "If you want good, sweet mutton, kill your sheep without worrying and fatigue; the less exercise the better. Hang him up by the hind legs and clean him at once; now change ends; hang him by the head, and skin down the tail; the job is done in half the time, and done neatly. It is not the wool that gives mutton the sheepy taste and smell; it is the food during exercise and after being killed; hence the necessity of speedy work until cleaned."

The *Pittsburgh Commercial* says it is stated that Mr. Evans, a railroad by Yale College for Boston, in his *Tillam* trial, as a testimonial to him, and that Yale is to pay him \$10,000.

Accommodations for Visitors to the Centennial.

Director General Gashorn, in his letter to the Centennial Committee, says: "It is estimated that from 6,000 to 10,000 non-resident commissioners, exhibitors and employees will require lodging for a period of seven months in Philadelphia during the exhibition, and that there will be an average of 20,000 visitors to the city daily, for whom comfortable, cheap and convenient quarters must be provided. What ability the existing hotels in this city have for accommodating so great a number I am not advised, but as so much of the success of the exhibition will depend on the accommodations that may be offered to the public in this behalf I cannot too urgently call the attention of the committee and citizens of Philadelphia to the importance of considering this subject without delay, with the view of organizing a system of hotel accommodations that will be sufficient for all reasonable demands. The official announcement that ample provision under proper regulations has been made will greatly increase interest in the exhibition at home and abroad. Transportation will be required for from 40,000 to 60,000 persons daily to and from the park, and on extraordinary occasions double these numbers may have to be provided. At the Paris exhibition in 1867 there was an average of 70,000 daily admissions, and the daily attendance at Fairmount Park will be at least 50,000. It should be remembered also that this multitude must be transported by private and public conveyances, between the hours of eight A. M. and twelve P. M., and return between five and eight P. M. The question of transportation for such great numbers therefore becomes as difficult as it is essential. The attendance will largely depend on facilities that will be offered for the comfort and convenience of visitors. Hence the importance of a satisfactory solution of this question should be included in the condition of the approaches to the park from different sections of the city, and also the tariff of rates for carriages, hack, cabs, omnibuses, and other public conveyances, which should be regulated by law to prevent imposition. It is apparent that these questions, of great local interest in their character, are of great interest to the general public, and are really the most essential elements to the success of the exhibition. In the proper provision for their regulation is involved the reputation of the city and the good will of the public toward the enterprise. The accommodation of visitors without the exhibition ground does not properly come within the duties of the national commission. The commission will, however, secure, as far as possible, favorable transportation facilities for exhibitors and visitors to the city, but the special arrangements for their entertainment while in the city should be made by the citizens of Philadelphia."

The Handkerchief.

A young man called on a gentleman acquaintance, whom he expected to find alone, but was ushered into the presence of five or six ladies. Under ordinary circumstances, this unexpected array of beauty would not have awed or perplexed him, but just at the time he chanced to be laboring under a huge chew of tobacco. As the juice of the vile plant filled his mouth, he glanced around in search of spittoon. No such article was visible. He grew warm, and questions addressed to himself he could only answer with a nod or a shake of his head. Just as the tobacco began to steal out of the corners of his overburdened mouth, he bethought him of his handkerchief. Hastily drawing it from his pocket, he raised the other hand and pointed toward the window. While the ladies were looking in that direction, trying to ascertain what had attracted his attention, he quickly squinted the load of tobacco in his handkerchief, folded it up, and placed it in his pocket. This relieved from the cause of his embarrassment, and feeling that his strange conduct had excited the surprise of the party, he exerted all his powers of mind and manner to remove whatever unfavorable impression he had created. He chatted and laughed, told stories, perpetrated puns, and was so agreeable that the ladies wished he could be with them always. His previous singular demeanor was forgotten, and as jibe and jest leaped from his lips each fair listener inwardly wished that "Heaven had made her such a man." He told a joke on himself, and it was a good one. They all laughed loud and long, and he as loud and long as any of them. He laughed, until the tears came into his eyes, and he pulled forth the handkerchief and wiped them away.

That Handkerchief!

That tobacco-laden handkerchief. In a moment of forgetfulness he wiped away the tears of joy with that reeking handkerchief!

"He has broken a blood-vessel!" the startled woman cried, as swift-winged with fear, they flew for assistance. When they returned, their entertainer was gone. He is still gone, and anxious friends are dragging the river for his body, as he was last seen flying in that direction.

For the Doctor.

In a little village of southern France the physician quarreled with one of his friends, a merchant, because the latter had said that physicians were asses. The merchant soon after this fell ill, but the doctor refused to see him unless he would take back his opinion of the medical profession. Ten years passed on and one day the semi-paralyzed merchant was sunning himself before his door, he saw the doctor pass. "Hallo, Dr. Busaragus," he cried, "you can come to see me now! I have changed my opinion." "So much the better," replied the doctor, "for unless you had I never recognize you." Yes, I've changed my opinion, entirely changed it," continued the merchant, "formerly I said physicians were asses. 'You were wrong,' 'I know it; it is the patients who are the asses.' 'Why so?' 'Because if they were not asses they would not send for the doctors.'"

Epitaph on a top—"All's well that ends well."

The Great Farmer of the World.

A Sacramento paper publishes the following respecting the farming operations of a man whom it denominates "the largest farmer in the world," which, considering that he "runs" his farm of 50,000 acres himself, personally superintending it all, the appellation is correct:

The great farmer of the world, Dr. Hugh J. Glenn, of Jacinto, Colusa Co., California, has raised and harvested the past season, on his own farm, 600,000 bushels of wheat. This would load eighteen 1,000 ton ships, or 300 canal boats. All this wheat he has now in his own warehouses, ready for shipment when the water in the Sacramento river rises sufficiently. The doctor pays \$90,000 freight to put his wheat in the San Francisco market. The doctor is a wonder to the agricultural world and to himself. He runs ninety gang plows and a whole country's population in the harvest field, with a dozen threshers. His farming is not confined to wheat alone. He markets \$100,000 worth of stock each year. Dr. Glenn is a practical farmer and manages all his immense business himself. He can mend a shoe and make a key to an ox-bow with his jackknife, just as easy as drawing his check for \$100,000, which he can do every day in the week. Dr. Glenn has only experienced one surprise during the year, and that was when a friend informed him that a panic had entered the land. Glenn was born in Augusta Co., Virginia.

This is a remarkable case of farming enterprise, and is enough to make the ordinary granger open his eyes in amazement. Dr. Glenn, though born in Virginia, came to Missouri, when quite young, with his father, Mr. George Glenn, who is still a resident of Monroe Co. He received a good collegiate education and when near the age of maturity studied medicine. Just about the time he received his diploma the Mexican war broke out and he enlisted in the Missouri company which accompanied Doniphan's expedition through New Mexico. Chihuahua, etc., returning when the war was done. When the California excitement came on in the winter of 1848-9 he immediately set about organizing an expedition across the plains to the land of gold. This was successfully landed, and after mining for some time with great success (every time he struck his pick he brought out color), the doctor went into speculation in live stock, bought a ranch and ran it with great profit. He added immense tracts of land to his original ranch, and became, what he now is, the greatest farmer in the world. Dr. Glenn is about forty-eight years old, of small stature, being about five feet seven inches in height, with a tough and wiry body, Auburn hair and blue eyes, and is possessed of an energy that no obstacle can surmount. He knows no such word as fail.

If the doctor, however, has a weakness it is for draw poker. He bets with the same voluminous impetuosity that he does everything else. He has been known to stand "pat" without a pair and "raise" \$10,000. On several occasions he has lost immensely.

Habits of Childhood.

It is as important that correct habits with respect to sleep and air be formed in children as that their diet shall be properly regulated. For the first three or four weeks of its life the infant sleeps nearly all the time, waking only to satisfy the demands of hunger. Even so early as this in the child's life, its periods of waking may be so arranged that they shall come in the day-time and the whole of the night be given to sleep. The health of the mother no less than that of the child requires this. There are intelligent and judicious mothers who so train their infants that during the first year of their lives they are invariably asleep between six at night and six in the morning. This gives the mother twelve hours of unbroken rest from the care of her child. No mother or other person who is nervous, irritable and worn can soothe and quiet a worrying baby. Ten chances in eleven a good-natured baby will be made cross by the unpleasant personal magnetism of a sick or nervous attendant. So that the highest health of the child requires that she who takes care of it shall be cheerful, untroubled, contented, and unless she has abundant sleep and recreation this is impossible. In youth a third part of the twenty-four hours is spent in sleep, and in many instances more than this. It requires longer to "knit up the raveled web of care" in some children than in others (the same is true of grown people), and those whose habits in respect to diet and exercise are normal should be permitted to sleep as long as they will. The habit of early rising is very valuable and important, and should be formed by requiring the child to go to bed so early that he will awake early without being called. This is of importance in another respect not often mentioned—the eyes of those who go to bed early are not injured by exposure to artificial light, which is most baneful to both children and grown people when they are very sleepy.

Long and sound sleepers, as a rule, attain the greatest longevity, and the reason is obvious. In sleep the brain and nerve centers recover what they have lost during the activities of the day, and accumulate force to be again expended. If the drafts of each day are honored at night at the bank of sleep, bankruptcy will be long in coming.

Newspaper By-Laws.

1. Be brief. This is the usage of telegraph and stenography.
2. Be pointed. Don't write all around a subject without hitting it.
3. State facts, but don't stop to moralize. It's a drowsy subject. Let the reader do his own dreaming.
4. Eschew preface. Plunge at once into your subject, like a swimmer into cold water.
5. If you have written a sentence that you think particularly fine, draw your pen through it. A pet child is always the worst in the family.
6. Condense. Make sure that you really have an idea, and then record it in the shortest possible terms. We want thoughts in their quintessence.
7. When your article is completed, strike out nine-tenths of the adjective.

Who Are the Vulgar?

Mr. James Parton lectured before the Liberal Club, taking for his subject the question "Who Are the Vulgar?" He gave the following illustrations:

On a recent tour through Kansas, the lecturer had the pleasure of meeting a young English colonist, who was scattering a fortune in his efforts to plow up a few thousand acres of hard prairie, and the chief delight of whose life was to put on a dress-coat when the day's work was done, and dine at 7:30. Woe be to him who in those wilds attempted to dress or conduct himself according to the effete standards of the East. Sitting at the dinner-table of a Colorado "hotel" recently, he (the speaker) became suddenly conscious that his *vis-a-vis*, a youth of twenty-two, in the characteristic garb of a broad-brimmed hat, leather hunting-jacket, and shooting materials *ad libitum*, was growing restive at something he (the lecturer) was doing. The cloud on the young man's brow deepened rapidly, and in the space of another minute he dropped his knife, and turning round to the rest of the company, exclaimed: "Well, I'll be hanged if I can stand this any longer. Why, he's eating pie with a fork!" David Crockett, after returning home from his first trip to New York, gave his backwoods auditors his idea of the First Gentleman in the Metropolis—"Philip Hone is the most gentlemanly man in New York, boys, and I'll tell you how I know it. When he asks you to drink he don't hand you a glass, he puts the decanter on the table, and walks off to the window and looks out until you have finished." It was curious how the popular opinion in regard to these subjects changed with the longitude. In some parts of India and China the ladies all black their teeth in much the same fashion that we do our boots. A native of that country, who was pointed out the beautiful wife of an Englishman, at some public festival, remarked: "The English lady is not handsome; why, her teeth are as white as a dog's teeth, and her cheeks is the color of a potato-blossom." Much of this difference of opinion as to the elements of vulgarity was due to erroneous conceptions.

A Prussian professor, who had lately been intrusted by his government with the duty of examining into the subject of shell-fish and their successful propagation on the shores of the Baltic, reported, after a patient examination of the facts in the case, that shell-fish had a deleterious and treasonable tendency, and were for those reasons not to be encouraged. The evil consequences of their free consumption were best seen, the professor said, in America. In that misguided country the people were in the custom of frequenting seditious gatherings known as clam-bakes, where after gorging themselves on a species of clam, called the oyster, they proceeded to talk treason, abuse the government, teach each other's hair, and fight like madmen. In fact, the devouring of this ill-starred bivalve made the poor people crazy, and for this reason, the learned professor deprecated its further propagation in German waters. Another fact that challenged their attention was the contempt with which Europeans, and especially Englishmen, were apt to regard American customs and institutions. Here every honest man was a gentleman, and every honest woman a lady. In many other things—in art, science, and in agriculture—the American people were inferior, but in that one they were superior to all the systems which the old world could boast. The extent to which this thoroughly American idea was reversed in older countries cannot be conceived by those who have not visited them in person. No American knew what it meant in England to be called "Lord." He (the speaker) had seen a gentleman of worth and position stand absolutely spellbound in the presence of a titled loafer, whose only claim to be noticed lay in the extent and variety of his kennels. In America, so great of late years, had become the public disgust for great titles and great fortunes that a very rich man was no longer respected. Of what use was it to accumulate millions by years of industry and patience when a political blackleg could come along and steal a double fortune in half the time. The American of good repute is ever growing afraid of displays, which formerly were thought proper enough; afraid to wear his own honest diamonds for fear of being taken for a gambler or a person who had plastered a court-house.

Effect of Exercise.

It is found by observation that the effect of "training," or the persistent use of gymnastic exercises, is to enlarge the heart and lungs both in size and capacity. Archibald McLaren, superintendent of the Oxford gymnasium, and author of "Physical Education," says: "One of the army officers sent me to be instructed in gymnastics gained five inches in girth around the chest in less than three months." That this growth is not explained by the mere enlargement of the pectoral muscles is proved by the increased volume of air which the lungs are enabled to respire, as is demonstrated by the spirometer, and post-mortem abundantly show an increased capacity as well as size in the heart and large blood vessels. The lungs increase both in length and breadth, forcing the ribs outward and the diaphragm downward. It is for this reason that athletes and gymnasts are enabled to make prolonged and violent exertions without getting out of wind. The capacity of the heart and central arteries being enlarged, they can accommodate more blood. Their contractile power being increased by this new demand upon them, they are enabled to send on the current through the lungs with increased velocity, and thus by their greater capacity are able to oxygenize the blood as fast as it is supplied to them, and so no congestion takes place, and no inconvenience is felt. The normal capacity of the lungs of an adult male is about two hundred cubic inches. It is computed that an enlargement of three inches around the chest gives an increase of fifty cubic inches of lung capacity.

It is said by the "oldest inhabitant" that such a midwinter drought as has occurred in Western New York was never seen before. It is to be hoped that it may not be seen again.

THE BUSINESS OUTLOOK.

The Past and the Future as Viewed from a Commercial Standpoint.

The report of the Mercantile Agency of Dun, Barlow & Co., in their review of business, says: Chief among the favorable signs of the times is the general tendency toward economy. Extravagant expenditure, up to the end of 1873, was one of the most alarming phases noticeable in the community, and even had the process of reversing that tendency been more rule and disasterous, the panic and its succeeding months of depression will not have been in vain if the necessity for retrenchment has been made apparent. That this reduction in expenditure has been almost universal is evidenced by the restriction of trade during the year of which so many complain. Otherwise it is difficult to account for the dull times in a country so abundantly supplied with every essential of prosperity—with crops unsurpassed, and an area under cultivation never equaled; with a productive power in its manifold industries beyond belief twenty years ago, and a marked progress in all material elements. Had there been any widespread distress, any failure of production, scarcity of labor, or continued disturbance of the monetary system of the country, the depression of the past year might be attributed to other causes than now appear. What is the legitimate trade of the country founded on but the actual demands of the community? If these wants are less in extent in one year, or a series of years, than in another, the legitimate trade is just so much influenced. It is obvious, therefore, if the depression of the year can be attributed to no worse cause than a judicious economy, there is no great ground for apprehension. On the contrary, the only true path back to renewed activity and a safe prosperity is in this direction. It is true that the purchasing power of the people in many localities is impaired by the condition of numerous industries now paralyzed from previous over-production. Time is needed to restore these interests to their normal condition, and we must wait patiently until the equilibrium between supply and demand for these products adjusts itself. If in the delay no greater calamities occur than have been apparent in the past year, there will be cause for congratulation.

Still another hopeful sign is the steady effort to at least largely reduce indebtedness, if not entirely to liquidate it. While among railroads and largely expanded corporations this has been found next to impossible, we are persuaded that, among merchants and traders, the amount of current indebtedness, as compared with this time last year, is vastly decreased. We have had abundant opportunity to note this process of liquidation, and through it had very nearly reached its minimum prior to the purchases for the spring trade, we are persuaded there has been many a prosperous time in the history of the country when the realizable assets of the mercantile community were far less in proportion to the liabilities than now.

A close conservatism in the granting of credits is another prominent feature of encouragement, and in this our peculiar position enables us to speak somewhat authoritatively. We find the shrewdest merchants not content, as they formerly were, with markings and ratings of credit, with mere generalities and meagre reports; but they demand close estimates, the fullest details as to assets and liabilities, particulars as to antecedents, character and capacity, which in the large majority of cases we are not only able but too glad to supply.

We are conscious that there is much in the past year to discourage, and, seemingly, to delay a return to a healthy condition of trade. Prices for many products have materially declined, large losses have been submitted to, and sales have been largely restricted. Those cases are rare in which the surplus in business has been much increased as the result of the year, while the cases are numerous where parties have barely held their own; and many, if they honestly look their affairs in the face, must admit a loss.

Liquor in New York.

There was a lengthy session of the New York Assembly committee on internal affairs, convened for the purpose of taking into consideration the excise bills now before the Legislature. The subject of a uniform excise law for the whole State is an important one. The liquor interests were represented at the meeting by a large delegation, also the beer and ale dealers. It is understood that the principal points of the bill proposed by Mr. George A. Stant, of New York, will be adopted by both houses. This bill provides in the main that commissioners of excise in each city, town and village of the State shall have power to grant licenses for a period of six months and not more than a year at a time.

The license fee is set down as follows:

For sale of malt liquors, light and native wines or beer not less than \$20 nor more than \$30.

For sale of spirituous liquors, wines, ales and beer, not less than \$30 nor more than \$50.

For hotel, having 100 lodging rooms, not less than \$100 nor more than \$150.

Hotels having more than 100 lodging rooms, not less than \$150 nor more than \$250.

In case of refusal to grant a license the party will be entitled to hearing before the courts, and if no valid objection appears, then the commissioners are compelled to grant such privilege.

It is made the duty of the sheriff, his deputies and the police authorities, to report any infringement of the law, but the commissioners are empowered to prosecute and recover penalties in the courts. The bill also provides that the commissioners of excise, in each city of the State, shall be appointed by the mayors thereof, and confirmed by the common council, and for good cause removed by the mayors. No mention is made of Sunday traffic.

As an instance of the depreciation of property in the oil regions, it is said that wells that once brought \$250,000 can now be purchased for \$15,000.

Items of Interest.

It is said Venns has a mountain five times as high as his highest.

More snow is said to have fallen in France this year than for twenty years previously.

Mark Twain says the Sandwich Islanders are generally as unlettered as the back side of a tombstone.

According to a French journal there are still living in France and its colonies 25,000 men who have fought under the first Napoleon.

A Pennsylvanian has served thirty-seven years in jails and prisons, and says that he prefers it to keeping house with an ill-tempered wife.

The total number of locomotive steam engines in the world is said to be 45,667, of which 14,223, or nearly one-third, are in the United States.

A little girl upon her return from a children's party, being asked if she had a good time, replied: "Yes; but there wasn't much boys there."

"Go it, old fellow," said two idle seagulls to an honest laborer at work. "Work away while we play; now and we'll reap." "Very likely, my lads," replied the old man, coolly; "I'm sowing hemp!"

"J. Gray—Pack with my box five dozen quills." There is nothing remarkable about this sentence, only that it is nearly as short as one can be constructed, and yet contain all the letters of the alphabet.

There is a man in a Chicago hospital, a victim of a railroad accident, whose head is alive, but his entire body seems to be dead. Knives have been stuck into his body, but they produce no effect upon him whatever.

The Kansas City (Mo.) *Journal* says that there is a young lady living in Clay county, about five miles from the city, twenty-five years of age, who has for years shed her finger and toe nails and her teeth every year.

A short-horned steer was recently butchered in Detroit that weighed 4,100 pounds alive, and yielded three thousand pounds of dressed beef. This is believed to be the largest animal ever slaughtered for beef on this continent.

High moral teaching having failed to stop a daily deficit in the cash accounts of the *Lawrence American*, the book-keeper next tried what a steel trap would do, and made the thief show his hand within twenty-four hours after.

A would-be school-teacher in Toledo recently replied to a question by one of the examiners: "Do you think the world is round or flat?" "Well, some people think one way and some another, and I'll teach round or flat just as the parents please."

A Western lawyer, noticing the prospect of a cup to a brother lawyer, says: "He needs no cup. He can drink from any vessel that contains liquor, whether the neck of a bottle, the mouth of a pickle jar, the spout of a keg, or the bung-hole of a barrel."

A countess was arrested in Paris, a day or two before Christmas, for shop-lifting. Her maids had been very profitable. She pleaded that she was separated from her husband, had little means, and as her pride compelled her to give New Year's presents, she was driven to theft.

A Western granger shipped a barrel of flour with the address, "Queen Victoria, Windsor Castle, England." He waited long and patiently for an autograph letter of thanks, and was much chagrined the other day at learning that his flour had been sold at auction with a mass of unclaimed freight some time before.

Kalakaua remarked to a friend, before leaving Washington, that the ladies of that city appeared to him "very forward." One of his attendants, who chanced at the moment to spy a fashionable dressed female with an enormous bustle, expressed the opinion that they seemed to him principally "backward."

It is safe to assert that a lease for 999 years has never run out in this country, but this has recently occurred in England. An estate let for that term has reverted to the representatives of the original holders. The land is at Woolwich, and was church property 1,000 years ago, but was leased to the crown for military purposes.

The population of Paris, numbering about 1,800,000, is said to consume about 40,000 gallons of wine, nearly 2,000,000 gallons of alcohol and alcoholic liquors, 500,000 gallons of cider and 6,800,000 gallons of beer—some twenty-eight gallons of wine, beer, and spirits a year for each of the inhabitants, including women and children.

A lady residing in Newark Valley noticed the oven doors of the stove open. On retiring she closed them. In the morning, on going out in the kitchen, she noticed a peculiar smell emanating from the oven. On opening the door she found that her two favorite cats had crawled in the night before, she closing them in, and they had been literally roasted.

A New Orleans minister recently married a colored couple, and at the conclusion of the ceremony remarked: "On such occasions as this it is customary to kiss the bride, but in this case we omit it." To this unceremonious remark the indignant bridegroom very pertinently replied: "On such an occasion as this it is customary to give the minister ten dollars, but in this case we will omit it."

A peculiar libel case is to be tried before the Chester county (Pa.) courts. A Mr. William Benner posted a notice on his property forbidding a neighbor, named Lewis H. Hammond, or his family from trespassing on his grounds. Hammond retaliated by a similar prohibition of Benner from his grounds, adding the words: "As I have only four turkeys left," and therein lies the alleged libel.